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## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STAFF MEMORANDUM

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DATE: March 2, 1999

TO: SENATOR ROBERT WIRCH, CHAIRPERSON, SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING AND GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS

FROM: Dan Fernbach, Senior Staff Attorney

SUBJECT: 1999 Senate Bill 42, Relating to Qualifications for Absentee Voting

1999 Senate Bill 42 was introduced by Senator Risser on February 16, 1999 and referred to the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and Government Operations. A public hearing on the bill has been scheduled for March 11, 1999.

### **A. PRESENT LAW**

Under current law, any individual who expects to be absent from his or her municipality of residence on election day may obtain and cast an absentee ballot if he or she cannot vote in person due to age, sickness, handicap, disability, jury duty, service as an election official or religious reasons.

### **B. PROVISIONS OF SENATE BILL 42**

Senate Bill 42 amends the state election laws to permit any elector to obtain and cast an absentee ballot by simply applying to his or her municipality of residence. The elector does *not* need to give a reason in order to vote by absentee ballot, and the above-cited reasons, as set forth in ss. 6.85 (1), 6.87 (2) and 6.88 (1), Stats., are repealed.

If enacted, the bill would first apply to absentee ballots requested for the September 2000 primary election.

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